

# The language of planning and positive intention

As we adjust back to work in this still complex period, it is useful to reflect on how you describe your plans and intentions in Business English. Part 1, of a two part series, explores the language used to confidently express your plans.

## 1) 'Will' and 'Going to'

'Will' and 'going to' allow you to state a positive intention or plan. 'Going to' can feel stronger than 'will' as it implies you have already decided what to do and are going to implement/take forward the action.

**Example:** I am going to send the report tomorrow.

'Will' can be used to communicate a dynamism and responsiveness. It implies you have spontaneously decided to do something in the moment/real-time.

**Example:** I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

## 2) Other strong expressions

There are a number of other expressions that can be used to communicate a strong plan or intention. Please see the examples below:

- I **intend** to review this tomorrow.
- I **plan** to speak to the sales team on Friday.
- I **expect** to have this finished by Monday.

### 3) Precise plans

The present continuous (verb + ing) can be used when you have a precise plan which is fixed in your schedule. Remember that 'diary', 'agenda', 'schedule' and 'calendar' can all be used interchangeably.

**Example:** We are meeting with customer x on the 22 January 2021.

Note that using the present continuous for future plans feels sharper/more streamlined than using 'we are going to meet with customer x on the 22 January 2021'.

### 4) External plans

The present continuous is a great tool to use in describing plans that you control (to some extent at least!). However, you might want to talk about external events managed by your team, division, company or highlight official information, such as railway/flight departures. The present simple allows you to do this. Please see the examples below.

**Example:** The team meeting is next Tuesday.

**Example:** The conference starts on the 4 February.

**Example:** The audit is fixed for the 25 January.

Notice the distinction can be subtle between using the continuous and simple forms in future plans. It often centres on the degree to which you were personally involved in the planning process.

The expressions above allow you to confidently state plans and intentions. We all face the danger of overpromising - I am going to send the report tomorrow - is unequivocal. If there are issues that might impact you meeting the deadline you might want to use more qualified language. Part 2 gives you useful expressions to do just that.